



**Spire Healthcare**

## **Treatment summary**

### **Vasectomy reversal operation**

#### **What is a vasectomy reversal?**

A vasectomy reversal is an operation to re-join each of the tubes (vasa deferentia) that carry sperm from the testicles to the penis. These were cut during your vasectomy operation. For more information about vasectomy, please see the separate Spire Healthcare treatment summary sheet, Vasectomy operation.

There are a number of alternative ways to have a family, including vasectomy reversal and using donor sperm. Your surgeon will explain the alternatives to you, and discuss the risks and benefits of vasectomy reversal.

A vasectomy reversal operation is usually done under general anaesthesia, which means that you will be asleep throughout the procedure and will feel no pain. This is used because it is important that you are completely still during this delicate procedure.

Vasectomy reversal is routinely performed as a day-case procedure, without an overnight stay in hospital.

#### **Does vasectomy reversal work?**

Vasectomy reversal operations are more successful if they are done fairly soon after the original vasectomy. About eight out of ten men father children when their vasectomy is reversed within three years of the original vasectomy. If 15 years or more have passed since the vasectomy, this success rate falls to about three out of ten men.

It is important to consider that success is not guaranteed. Even if the operation is technically successful, the presence of sperm in your semen doesn't guarantee that your partner will get pregnant.

## About the operation

Your surgeon will make two cuts (incisions), one in each side of your scrotum. Sometimes, only one cut is needed. Usually, the cut(s) are in the same place as the scars from your vasectomy. The ends of each tube are carefully pulled through the incision. With the help of an operating microscope, your surgeon repairs each tube using dissolvable stitches. The tubes are placed back inside the scrotum and the skin is closed with stitches. A vasectomy reversal operation usually takes one to two hours.

Alternatively, a more complicated procedure (a vasoepididymostomy) may be done. This involves joining the tubes directly to the epididymis (the sperm stores near the surface of each testicle).

After a vasectomy reversal your scrotum will be sore and bruised for a few days.

A vasectomy reversal is a generally safe surgical procedure. For many men, the benefits are greater than any disadvantages. However, all surgery carries an element of risk.

Bleeding inside the scrotum can make it swollen and painful. This is called a haematoma and may need further surgery. Following your surgeon's instructions carefully will help to prevent a haematoma.

Sometimes fluid can build up around one or both testicles. This is called a hydrocele, and will need to be drained or surgically removed.

It is possible for sperm to leak out of the cut tubes and collect in surrounding tissues. If this happens, hard lumps called sperm granulomas can form. Sperm granulomas are not harmful, and can be treated with anti-inflammatory drugs. Occasionally sperm granulomas are painful and need to be removed.

A small proportion of men develop long-term testicular pain. This may be due to pinched nerves or scarring, and may require further surgery.

Sometimes it is only possible to re-join one of the vasa deferentia, but it may still be possible to have children.

Rarely, injury to the blood vessels can permanently damage one of the testicles. This is called testicular atrophy.

The chance of complications depends on the exact type of operation you are having and other factors such as your general health. Ask your surgeon to explain how any risks apply to you.

**To find out more about having a vasectomy reversal in a Spire Healthcare hospital, please contact your local Spire hospital.**



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